

## **STUDENT FOOD SERVICES ACCOUNTS**

The Foxborough School Committee establishes the following goals:

- To establish a consistent district policy regarding the method of payment for meals, charge availability and collection methods for charges in the district's meal program.
- To treat all students with dignity at all times.
- To support positive interactions with students, parent(s)/guardian(s), and district staff to the maximum extent possible.
- To encourage the parent(s)/guardian(s) to assume the responsibility of payments and to promote self-responsibility of the student.

### **Administration of Policy**

The district is responsible for ensuring that the Food Services accounts are properly managed and accurately reported. The administration will closely monitor student school meal accounts with the goal of having all in good standing, thus eliminating negative balances and delinquent accounts.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) will strongly be encouraged to make payments via the online payment system. By registering for an account, parent(s)/guardian(s) can choose to receive email alerts to low balances, set up automatic deposits to student's account or schedule payments to add funds to the student account. The district administration will provide annual notice of how to access the online payment system.

### **Definitions**

- Good standing - a balance in the account of \$0.00 or more
- Negative balance (deficit accounts) - a balance in the account less than \$0.00
- Delinquent - an account which has a negative balance and no contact or payments have been received from the student or parent(s)/guardian(s) for 30 days after first notice.

### **Student Accounts**

Under no circumstances will a student be denied a lunch or receive an alternative lunch.

### **Blocks on Accounts**

Parent(s)/guardian(s) may contact, in writing, the Food Services Director to place a block on their student's account to prohibit the purchase of a la carte items or to set restrictions for daily spending.

## **Refunds**

For any student who has withdrawn, a written request for a refund of any funds remaining in the student's account must be submitted. For students who are graduating, a refund may be issued with a written request, or funds can be transferred to a sibling's account with a written request.

## **Remaining Balances**

Any positive balance may:

- Remain on account to be used in the following school year
- Be transferred to a sibling's account, or
- Be refunded to a parent(s)/guardian(s) with written request.

## **Balance Notifications**

Parents will receive bi-monthly negative balance notifications via email from the district. Food service employees will not discuss account balances with students.

## **Deficit Accounts**

Monthly, when a student account deficit meets or exceeds the cost of eight lunches, the food service director, principal or designee:

- Will send a letter to the parent(s)/guardian(s) requesting immediate payment.
- Will, if applicable, assist the family in applying for free and reduced priced lunch.

If the balances continue to escalate, there are no mitigating factors and the parent(s)/guardian(s) has not made any payment in an effort to reduce the negative balance or fails to bring the student's account in good standing by May 1<sup>st</sup>, the Business Office may take the following action(s) on accounts with a deficit of \$100 or greater:

- Deem the account delinquent
- Refer the account to a collection agency
- Initiate a claim in the court system

If a student's account is delinquent at the end of the school year, the Business Office may take one or more of the following actions, unless or until prohibited by state law or regulation:

- Delay or refuse student's participation in fee-based extra-curricular school services
- Refer the account to a collection agency
- Initiate a claim in the court system and/or contact the MA District Attorney's office
- Notify other appropriate state agencies.

If a senior's account is not in good standing as of May 1st, the administration may take the following action:

- Prohibit student from participation in senior activities and/or graduation exercises.

## **Reimbursement to Food Service for Deficit Accounts**

Bad debt must be written off as an operating loss and may not be absorbed by the non-profit school food service account. Repayment of bad debt resulting from unpaid meal charges must be restored

using non-Federal funds at year end. These funds may come from: the school district's general fund, special funding from State or local governments, or any other non-Federal sources. Collection efforts may continue into the next school year.

LEGAL REFS: MGL 71:72; USDA School Meal Program Guidelines May 2017

CROSS REFS: JQ – Student Fees, Fines & Charges

Adopted: October 15, 2018